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Security Council

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Statement by the President of the Security Council

At the 4675th meeting of the Security Council, held on 18 December 2002, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "The situation in Burundi", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council welcomes the signing of the ceasefire agreement between the Transitional Government of Burundi and the Conseil national pour la défense de la démocratie-Front de défense de la démocratie (CNDD-FDD) on 2 December 2002 in Arusha ("the Ceasefire Agreement"). It pays tribute to the courageous and responsible decision by the President of the Transitional Government of Burundi, Mr. Buyoya, and by the legal representative of CNDD-FDD, Mr. Nkurunziza, to sign the agreement. It welcomes their decision to implement the truce immediately, while finalizing all pending political issues within the time limits set by the agreement.

"The Security Council supports the decision of the 19th regional Head of States summit of the Regional Initiative to direct the Palipehutu Forces Nationales de Libération (FNL), to enter into negotiation immediately and conclude a ceasefire agreement by 30 December 2002 or face the consequences. In this regard, the Council strongly urges the FNL, under the leadership of Mr. Rwasa, to put an end immediately to the hostilities, sign a ceasefire agreement and commit themselves to political negotiations. It recalls that the settlement of the crisis in Burundi depends on a political solution, and that only a negotiated settlement in the framework of the Arusha Agreement of 28 August 2000 will enable the country to restore stability, in accordance with the will of the Burundian people.

"The Security Council expresses its intention to support the immediate and full implementation of the agreements signed between the Burundian parties, in particular the Ceasefire Agreement of 2 December 2002. It requests the Secretary-General to study ways of responding positively and with urgency to the requests of the Burundian parties and of the Facilitator, the Deputy President of the Republic of South Africa, in particular with regard to:

- Any expertise and advice which the Secretariat could provide to facilitate the definition of the mandate and the deployment of the African mission provided for in the Ceasefire Agreement of 2 December;
- Facilitation of logistical assistance to the deployment of this mission;
- Mobilization and coordination of donor contributions;

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– Designation, at the request of the parties, of a person to chair the Joint Ceasefire Commission.

"The Security Council emphasizes the merits of cooperation between the African mission and the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), in particular in the border area.

"The Security Council expresses its thanks for the historic role played by former President Mandela, pays tribute and expresses its full support to the efforts of the Republic of South Africa, in particular its Deputy President, M. Zuma, the Facilitator of the Burundian peace process. It pays tribute to the role of the African Union. It also pays tribute to the efforts of the Republic of Tanzania and President Mkapa, President Bongo of Gabon, President Museveni of Uganda, and the other Regional Initiative countries. The Council also expresses its full support to the action taken by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Burundi and approves the recommendations of the Secretary-General, in paragraphs 47 to 51 of his report of 18 November 2002 (S/2002/1259), with a view to increasing the resources of the United Nations Office in Burundi.

"The Security Council recalls that the responsibility for the Burundi peace process lies primarily with the Burundian parties themselves. The parties must agree without further delay the modalities of the reform of the Army, as well as the political issues mentioned in Annex 2 of the Ceasefire Agreement of 2 December 2002. The Council requests the parties to continue to respect their commitments. The Council condemns the human rights violations that have taken place in Burundi and calls for the perpetrators to be brought to justice.

"The Security Council recalls the joint communiqué issued by the Governments of Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo on 7 January 2002 (S/2002/36) expressing their intent to normalize their relations. It calls on them to finalize and implement an accord as soon as possible ensuring the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo will not be used for armed attacks against Burundi, as well as the effective withdrawal of Burundian troops from Congolese territory. It also notes that, as the Burundi parties have taken the bold step of reaching the 2 December 2002 Ceasefire Agreement, the Security Council stands ready to consider steps against States that are found to continue to support armed attacks by the Burundi rebels.

"The Security Council recalls that the support of the international community, in particular financial support, is critical to the success of the peace process. In that regard, it welcomes the success of the donor round table organized in Geneva on 27-28 November 2002, and calls on donors to respond urgently to the significant progress made recently and to disburse fully the contributions promised so far. In particular, it calls on donors to provide the necessary financial assistance to facilitate the return to development and financial stability, and to consolidate the substantial efforts deployed by the Burundian authorities in this regard.

"The Security Council pays tribute to the donors that are supporting the deployment of the South African Special Protection Unit, encourages them to continue their efforts and calls on the donor community to mobilize to help the countries concerned set up, as soon as possible and in liaison with the United Nations, the African mission provided for in the Ceasefire Agreement of

2 December 2002, and to participate to the financing of the repatriation and the reintegration of Burundian refugees.

"The Security Council strongly condemns all massacres and other acts of violence against civilians in Burundi.

"The Security Council expresses serious concern about the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Burundi. The Council calls on all Burundian parties to take practical steps to grant safe access to humanitarian personnel in their efforts to deliver assistance to vulnerable populations throughout Burundi."